

NATURAL RESOURCES CONSERVATION SERVICE CONSERVATION PRACTICE STANDARD

FENCE

(Feet)
CODE 382

DEFINITION

A stationary constructed barrier, as of posts, wires, wire mesh, gates, etc., electrified or not, used as a boundary or means of protection or confinement.

PURPOSES

This practice may be applied as part of a conservation management system to facilitate the application of conservation practices that treat the soil, water, air, plant, animal, and human resource concerns.

Applicable purposes include, but are not limited to:

Improve distribution and timing of livestock grazing

Reduce erosion and improve water quality by controlling livestock access to streams, springs, wetlands, and ponds

Facilitate livestock husbandry and grazing management

Protect newly planted areas from disturbance until established

Protect sensitive environmental areas and their flora from vehicular, pedestrian, or animal traffic and use

Protect the safety of people, livestock, and wildlife by limiting or denying access to hazardous areas.

CONDITIONS WHERE PRACTICE APPLIES

This practice may be applied on any area where access management is needed. Fences are not needed where natural barriers will adequately serve the purpose.

CRITERIA

General Criteria Applicable to All Purposes

Fencing materials, type and design of fence installed shall be of a high quality and durability. The type and

design of fence installed will meet the management objectives and topographic challenges of the site.

Fences shall be positioned to facilitate management requirements. The fence design and installation shall follow all Federal, State and local laws and regulations.

Height, size, spacing, and type of materials will be used that best provides the needs for the style of fence required and is best suited to the topography.

Cultural resources will be considered when planning this practice. This practice has the potential for adversely affecting cultural resources, and compliance with NRCS General Manual Section 420, Part 401 during the planning process as necessary.

Where appropriate, local cultural values will be incorporated into practice design in a technically sound manner.

CONSIDERATIONS

The fence design and location should consider: topography, soil properties, safety and management of livestock, wildlife movement, location and adequacy of water facilities, proportioning forage among grazing units, development of potential grazing systems, human access, landscape aesthetics, erosion problems, moisture conditions, flooding potential, stream crossings, and durability of materials.

Where applicable, cleared rights-of-way may be established which would facilitate fence construction and maintenance. All necessary erosion control measures will be applied to any cleared areas.

Fences across gullies, canyons, or streams may require special bracing, designs or approaches.

Areas where heavy seasonal runoff, flash flooding, or ice damage is anticipated may require breakaway or swinging watergaps.

Conservation practice standards are reviewed periodically and updated if needed. The current version of this standard is posted on our website at www.sd.nrcs.usda.gov or may be obtained at your local Natural Resources Conservation Service.

Fence design and location should consider ease of access for construction, repair and maintenance.

Extra maintenance may be required when locating fence in heavy vegetation or areas of potential blow-down.

PLANS AND SPECIFICATIONS

Plans and specifications are to be prepared for specific sites based on this standard (*cite applicable state guides here by name*).

Plans and specifications for installing fences shall be in keeping with this standard and shall describe the requirements for applying the practice to achieve all of its intended purposes.

OPERATION AND MAINTENANCE

Regular inspection of fences should be part of an on-going maintenance program. Inspection of fences after storm events is necessary to ensure the continued proper function of the fence system. Maintenance and repairs will be performed in a timely manner as needed.

Retain and properly discard all broken fencing material and hardware to prevent ingestion by animals or injury to equipment, people, or animals.

All necessary precautions should be taken to ensure the safety of construction and maintenance crews.